592 an extended family, the eldest male was in authority, though any of the
596 constituent households might terminate this authority by camping else-
where. Similarly the senior member of an extended family could curtail
[621] the authority of the band chief by withdrawing with his kinsmen to another
band or by forming an independent band, were the group sufficiently large.
[571] All groupings larger than the individual household presupposed that the
military and economic benefits of membership outweighed the disad-
vantages of submission to authority.

596 Assuming stable conditions, authority in the extended family lay with the
561 senior male. At his death the next oldest was presumptive head of the fam-
ily. As a group there was little contact between the young and those of
[603] grandparent status, though an individual might warm to one or more of his
[626] grandchildren and favor him in various ways. A child who spent consider-
able time with old people received the mildly derogatory term of *kɨpitɛ'puka*
("old-woman-child") because of imitating unconsciously the mannerisms
of old people and hence acting beyond its age. Although an exception to the
rule correlating age with authority may appear in the individual household,
[588] even here the elder might be active in an advisory capacity. Only under
extreme circumstances were old people allowed to die as outcasts. When
transportation was difficult or food running short, then with regret, often
[886] at their own request, the old were left behind on the march. To be sure, the
rule of senior authority was modified when it was realized that senility had
appeared. Then the next in age tactfully assumed the major administrative
role in the extended family or the band, if it had not already been relin-
quished.

556 The age-authority hierarchy was further reinforced by economic consider-
431 ations. It was the pattern to associate prestige with generosity. Those who
561 gave generously increased their own prestige, providing that they did not
593 bankrupt themselves thereby. Within the extended family it was the
554 practice to encourage siblings to give to their juniors. This was not only an
expression of endearment or of aiding a weaker person, as it was often
phrased. It also had the effect of putting juniors in the debt of seniors. To
be sure these debts were not the same within the family as outside the
family between unrelated persons, for repayment between relatives was
[684] not categorical. Yet we have such instances as a young man raiding for
horses to repay his father. The father had given horses in settlement to
a husband whose wife had had an affair with the son. In other cases where
an older brother had made his son a favored child, the younger brother gave
abundantly to this favored child, "to repay the older brother for his kind-
ness to him in his youth." We have also noted that young men returning
from war always gave some portion of their booty to older brothers. The
practice was to give first to the older because "they would not live so long
as the younger."

561 iority, tempered, to be sure, by bonds of affection between members of a
571 family, yet finally secure only in the company of one's equals, the com-
[602] rades, who were for the most part outside the kin group.

Generation

561 As seniority ordered the relations between males and to a lesser degree
602 between females, the concept of generation was the more important one
601 ordering the relations of Northern Blackfoot women to each other. With the exception of the sibling terms, which differentiate older and younger than
593 ego, the basis for social relationships was fixed by generation. Three main
561 types of relationship may be distinguished: (1) Mother-daughter relationships implied sacrifice by mother for daughter and obedience by daughter to mother's commands. A mother sent her daughter with a tipi made by her own hands to her first husband. She had also made moc-
[844] casins for her future son-in-law and his parents. At the birth of her daughter's child, she was a prominent figure in helping at the delivery. (2) In the absence of a mother, the older sister fulfilled these obligations, but in general the relations of older to younger sister required more reciprocity than was the case with ego's relationship to her mother. Once the younger sister reached a position where she had means of repaying, she was expected to
[595] repay in various ways her older sister's kindness. Such cooperation was the ideal, and a Blackfoot argument for sororal polygyny held that blood sisters made a more harmonious household than unrelated co-wives. However, in practice the older sister often sat leisurely in command of her husband's household as the "sits-beside-him wife" while her younger sisters performed
603 the arduous work in the tipi and cared for the children. (3) The relationship
561 of grandmother to granddaughter was typically remote, somewhat reserved and distant as before all elderly people. Grandmothers, however, made a practice of befriending and maintaining warm, affectionate relations with one or more of their grandchildren. Thus nearly every child could count on warmth and devotion in at least one of the austere old women.

561 These generations are conceptually arranged in two different ways. All
601 women of a mother and daughter line arranged themselves in biological generation terms. In addition there is evidence for counting generation in a second way, which fixed the relationships to the lateral lines. After ego's marriage cross-cousins on the mother's side were all called "grandchildren." At this time also the wives of this line of mother's brothers were no longer called "mother" but "daughter-in-law." On the paternal side father's sister
[178] was called "grandmother." Our older informants state that the female descending line of this woman was also called "grandmother." Today, however, the descendants are called "older sister" or "younger sister." The term "grandmother" is, nevertheless, in keeping with the practice of calling

607 to learn to cook, tan hides, and make moccasins. There was no hazing of the
585 new wife; rather, if very young, she was treated like a child in the attempt to make her feel at home in this new situation.

593 In addition social dicta prescribed that women be participators in the
562 cultural rewards apart from the warpath. This was mainly the case with
[778] ceremonial life. It was always necessary for a man to have a woman partner when he obtained the medicine pipe or entered the sacred societies. In these
[575] activities it was usually a wife, though a man might seek another woman to take her place. These women were not ceremonially so important as a male.
796 However, one case shows where a man refused to join the Crazy Dog society,
593 and to overcome his resistance, his comrades took his wife as a member. As
562 under this circumstance he could not refuse his wife and maintain com-
[575] munity respect, he paid for her membership and sat beside her in all the meetings. In the Sun Dance alone a woman overshadowed her husband, but
[571] this status assured her husband of a firm marital tie. As Sun Dance vower, she personified the cultural ideal of womanhood, the woman who above all was faithful to her husband.

562 Beyond this elevation of the status of women through the necessity for
842 women partners in receiving sacred objects and in participating in general social life, there lay a mystical concept. Through women came the greatest treasures the culture offered. This meant in the family that a man might
[603] have children, for children of both sexes were avidly desired. Older people
[597] raised their grandchildren in order to have children in the tipi. It was also the practice to adopt a child should one's own child die. This pattern of cul-
562 tural rewards went even farther. In obtaining the most sacred root in the
796 Horn and mo'toki societies, the root which was the zenith of sacred objects
778 brought to the earth by the woman who brought the Sun Dance, a woman
[575] was necessary. In an esoteric ceremonial act a woman obtained for her husband the root from a man who sold it. This was a very secret and unmention-
[432] able event that separated socially the seller from the buyer until the two
[571] "made friends" at some time when neither owned the root any longer. Thus through marriage the two worlds of the male and the female were united to
581 obtain the rewards of the culture.
582

Balancing of the Lines

601 The question of lineality arises in any discussion of kinship terminology
602 in its relation to the family organization. We believe that there is only slight, if any, emphasis on the paternal line.

601 Critical in fixing lineality is the relative weight of husband versus wife's
607 brother. In the foregoing paragraphs a relative balance of the two authorities has been indicated. Ideally, it was a friendly, warm, though respectful relationship, implying a type of cooperation like that between brothers,

of two grandchildren and created a grandparent-grandchild household. The other members of these households fissioned into nuclear and dependent nuclear families. The composition of one household (Case #3) changed because a woman and her only child were killed in an auto accident. The widower moved to Browning, and set up a nuclear household by marrying a divorcee and assuming care of her children.

The shifts evident in Diagram I are toward fission of diverse household members. Elders become heads of late stage types (single person and grandparent-grandchild) and younger persons become members of dependent or independent nuclear families. The data presented here also indicate a rate of transition among independent nuclear families of about three per cent per year. I suspect, based on previous observations, that these changes occur frequently.

Grandparent-Grandchild Households

This household form is somewhat more changeable than I had suspected during my earlier visit to the rural region. Grandparents who assume the care of grandchildren oftentimes provide for grandchild inheritance of grandparental properties, and the relationship is almost identical to a parent-child association. Yet in two cases parents whose marital and financial circumstances markedly improved, reclaimed their children, and in another case a grandchild moved into the household of a married female cousin. The remaining four grandparent-grandchild households remain of this type. Here we see then, three formerly grandparent-grandchild households moving into the final

stages of the family cycle. Two became conjugal pair households and one became a single person household. We see from these data that household response to economic variables--stable and moderately sufficient funds--is most predictable and sensitive.

Conjugal Pairs

Two of the five conjugal pairs changed. One became a single person household whereas the other joined an extended family household. The latter direct a modest ranching operation, and because age largely incapacitated the male head, a married daughter and her spouse and offspring moved in to keep the livestock business intact. The other three conjugal pairs remain the same.

Joint Family Households

The single joint family household, which consisted of married sisters (one spouseless) with their children and the spouse of one of the sisters, soon disbanded, as I had suspected. Each family head lives in a separate household. One woman remarried and resides with her children and husband in the center of Heart Butte, while the other lives in a welfare-provided trailer near her mother's family and is part of a mutual assistance land cluster. No new joint family household formed during my absence.

youngsters' parents in the flood of 1964. The elderly couple inhabits a flood house in Moccasin Flat, the poorer section of Browning. The grandchildren occasionally stay with their uncles or aunts in the rural districts when school is not in session. There are no available kinsmen who can manage the care of eight additional children in their households year around since all are now raising sizable families of their own. The grandparent-grandchild household, although overcrowded and seriously underfunded, is an exceptionally happy one. The children deeply love their grandparents and are unfailingly eager to assist with household tasks, including care of younger siblings.

Near this low-income grandparent-grandchild household is a low-income nuclear family. The female spouse of the household head is a niece of the female and male in the Grandparent-grandchild household. The dwelling is owned and rented by the elders. Assistance from the elders is meager, except for the provision of a dwelling at minimal cost. The young family has two other kinsmen available in Browning who could assist them--a married brother and married sister of the female--but these, too, are involved in raising sizable families. They have above average incomes, are climbing out of the poverty their parents knew, and are disinclined to offer money assistance to other related families.

Two other cases, both large households, cope as best they can with their meager resources. There is substantial assistance between the two; one is headed by the father of the male household head in the other. Transportation, child care, and occasional pooling of cash

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Mrs. Two Guns-White Calf and her granddaughter in 1920, at Glacier National Park. It is a Blackfoot tradition that grandparents take one of their grandchildren to raise and keep them company. In the Blackfoot language these children are called "old people children." Some of these children grew up to be very wise, especially in tribal lore, while others grew up to be lazy and spoiled. (PHOTO: GLACIER STUDIO, COLLECTION OF GOOD MEDICINE FOUNDATION)

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NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

Around the Household– Some Teachings from the Grandmothers

GRANDMOTHER IN HER HOUSE
by Ruth Little Bear

When I was just a little girl I spent a lot of time next to my grandmother. She was a very kindly lady, even though her name was Kills Inside. It was given to her by an old warrior who had killed an enemy in his own lodge. Her husband was old Heavy Head, whose name is still being carried by the many members of the Heavy Head family, who are all my close relations.

It was around 1920 when I lived with my grandma and grandpa Heavy Head. Life was very simple on the Blood Reserve during the Roaring Twenties. There were hardly any cars, no electricity, and no modern entertainments. The older tribe members still carried on with our traditional ways. We all had to work hard to make our lives just barely comfortable.

One of my grandmother's basic jobs was to prepare the food for her household. Let's say that she had a whole carcass of a freshly killed cow. She would prepare it the same way as she

since our grandfather lived to be ninety-seven. 000

My grandmothers have always been close to their grandchildren even to this day. It is common for the grandparents 603 to keep one of their grandchildren and raise it. One of our sons is living with my parents in this way. He and my father were both born on the same day, January 9, and they both have the same first name, Edward. Traditional closeness between elders and grandchildren gave kids an exposure to the same values their parents were raised by. It also gave kids a 603 lot of attention, which many modern children seem to be 855 sadly lacking. If the mother and father of a crying child were busy, there was usually a grandmother or grandfather nearby who would find out what was wrong. As a result, it is not our [861] custom to spank children, although it was occasionally done. This extra attention helps to explain how parents handled half a dozen or more small children inside their crowded tipis on long cold winter days and nights. The elders told stories, played games, and otherwise helped to occupy the minds of the children.

When I was young I used to take my little brother to the 604 home of my father's uncle, because his wife would tell us old-time stories. She was a real good storyteller, and we didn't mind walking several miles across the prairie to visit her as well as our cousins there. She would keep us entertained for hours. I can just imagine how it would have been if we had still been living in our old-time tipi camps, with aunts and uncles and grandparents all within short walking distance.

Old widows who were alone in the past were often given 768 an orphaned child by some relative. Any small child that lost 589 its mother was taken over by a relative, usually the grandmother. My grandmother's first husband, Joe Beebe, was 768 raised in this way. His mother died during childbirth, so her 603 mother raised him. This old lady would take him around to [853]

different nursing mothers so he could get some milk. She would feed him broths at other times and let him suckle on her own, dry breasts when he got too fussy.

My grandfather suckled on his grandmother's breasts so long that milk started coming out of them. This is true, because a number of relatives have told me that all the elders used to talk about it. She was very proud of herself, and showed off her nursing abilities whenever she could.

Generally children were fed nothing but mother's milk for the first three or four months. Their first food was usually a little broth, and they were given bones to suck on. I've heard of kids that were nursed till they were past six years of age. It wasn't unusual for a playing child to run indoors suddenly and ask to nurse from its mother. Some mothers liked to nurse their kids long as a form of birth control. But I hear this didn't always work.

Babies were kept bundled up most of the time. They were dressed on the upper part of the body while the lower part was packed with soft, dry moss. Then they were wrapped with soft cloth or hide and put inside their moss bag or cradleboard. A moss bag laces all the way up the front so that only the baby's head is exposed. A cradleboard is attached to the back of a moss bag to give it a solid frame, for transporting and to keep the baby better protected. I have used both of these with my kids.

I really like to watch babies when I unlace their moss bags and watch their little arms and legs stretch. They get so used to being in their bags that they often wouldn't sleep unless I laced them up first. This way they are so well padded that I feel very secure in handling them. I have always been told that babies are not strong enough to be held all the time unless they are well wrapped, like this.

Cradleboards were almost essential back in the days when my grandmothers did all their traveling by horseback. The strap on the back of the cradleboard was hooked over the high horn on the traditional-style woman's saddle.

159 strict. They used to strap us all the time. I wouldn't take that now. Later, there was this one guy, Mr. _____. He used to just talk to you. He talked real good. When he talked to you, you didn't feel like cutting up or making mischief.

These girls around here, well I guess you know about them. They're always out in the bushes with these guys. At school they write letters to each other, meet at the dances. Most of them meet at the Sun Dance. They go around the camp to meet. They go around under blankets so no one can recognize them.

I've been pretty rough on the girls too. You know, go out and start wrestlin' around right away. I used to go out with this girl in Stand-off. We'd go off and she'd say, "I saw you out with that girl," and I'd say, I saw you out with that guy," and we'd fight. We'd get real jealous. But I'm not a guy who likes to fool around.

A lot of guys, they do a lot of fooling around. When they get married they remember the past and get jealous, beat up their wife. These girls, they go around with these guys, they're easy. I don't want to marry one of them. I'm not going to get married but this one girl is sure putting the pressure on me.

Last year, I had this job. Made good money. After I quit work I had $195 and was goin' to buy a car. Well, I started buying clothes, goin' to rodeos, spendin' it little by little. Well, Calgary [stampede] came along, and I went to Calgary. I had about $100 left. I came back broke. You gotta have money in Calgary but it was worth it. I don't miss the car unless I'm walkin'.

571 These are some of the influences upon the young person growing up on the Blood Reserve. One notes a strong emphasis upon interpersonal relations. And, although many of these are of an ambivalent or aggressive nature, they [593] seem to be valued. Father, mother, sister, uncle, grand- [603] father, and an old man are important figures in the young [605] man's life. His cousin, demanding as he is, is also im- [648] portant. When the young Indian extends his quest for human